

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

Replace the paragraph at page 3, line 17, with the following paragraph:

Figs. 3a, 3b, and ~~[[3b]]~~3c are views showing the shapes of a normal preform, the preform when the inner part of the preform begins to be exhausted, and the preform when only the innermost part remains, respectively. Here, reference numerals 31 and 32 indicate a joint tube and the preform, respectively.